

**WILLIAMSBURG CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
MAY 5, 2003**

The Williamsburg City Council held a work session on May 5, 2003, at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Stryker Building.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Ms. Zeidler, Messrs. Haulman, Houghland, Scruggs and Tabb. Also present were City Manager Tuttle, City Attorney Phillips, and City Clerk Crist

Staff Attending: Department Head Nester and Assistant City Manager Jodi Miller.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Zeidler called the meeting to order.

OPEN FORUM

Mayor Zeidler opened the session for public comment.

David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue, addressed Council regarding a “cancer” in residential neighborhoods and student rentals. His neighborhood is quickly deteriorating because of the increase in rentals; there are only about ten homes left that are not rentals. Public drunkenness and disorderly conduct are some of the problems in his neighborhood. He urged review of current ordinances and strong enforcement to control the problems, increased fines, review of the noise ordinance and the need for enforcement during the day as well as night, appropriate maintenance and appearance of rentals (presented photographs to Council), more police patrols on a regular schedule, and that Council consider appropriating funds for upgrading of neighborhoods, such as lighting improvements, removal of graffiti and paint markings, and underground wires. Maintaining the residential quality of neighborhoods and controlling rentals should be priorities.

Katherine Blue, 511 Mill Neck Road, read the “Bike Month” Certificate of Recognition signed by Governor Warner and Secretary of the Commonwealth Anita A. Rember, and presented a copy to Council. Ms. Blue presented Council members with “Bike Month” t-shirts.

Mayor Zeidler thanked Ms. Blue and noted that in past years, Council members have participated in leadership bike rides.

No one else wished to speak. The session was closed.

BACKGROUND PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

Outreach and Youth Programs—Verbal Report by Peter Walentisch, Human Services Director

Peter Walentisch presented a report on Comprehensive Youth Services, which included work with preschool children to young adults, and their parents, relatives and neighborhoods. He was very proud of the program.

Andy Jacobs, Principal of Mathew Whaley School, spoke about outreach efforts and the Early Resource Center at the school. The school works in collaboration with the Department of Human Services. He recognized the excellent work of Zaida Bastidas and Archie Jefferson as youth mentors. The program is very effective and he thanked Council for their support.

Mr. Walentisch gave an overview of the "Family First—School Second" program. Ms. Bastidas made a presentation regarding the Youth Services Program, including goals, highlights, and statistics. A photograph board was presented to Council.

To summarize the benefits of the program, Mr. Walentisch read a letter from a young lady that had to leave the summer youth program because she was moving, but credited the program with changing her behavior for the better. The program is very popular and kids are eager to return.

Council members were appreciative of this community program that helps make our city a better place to live. Mr. Walentisch said his department could not do it alone. The great public/private partnership in our community was appreciated, which included the assistance of students from the College of William and Mary.

Mr. Walentisch addressed the partnership efforts to respond to calls for emergency assistance, especially for anyone who is homeless, which includes local people in crisis, transients, and police/fire referrals. A network exists to help with food, food stamps, sheltering, and general outreach for relief.

Mr. Scruggs said he was impressed with the work of Mr. Walentisch and his staff, their sensitivity, and degree of professionalism.

Mayor Zeidler said Council is looking forward to another successful Summer Youth Program.

Assessments—Verbal Report by John Mattson, City Assessor

Mr. Mattson, the new City Assessor, reported on his work regarding the assessment process and the Sales Ratio Study. He explained the "coefficient of dispersion" which is a statistical tool that shows uniformity in assessments, or how close property assessments are to market value. Mr. Mattson noted that overall, property assessments will increase as of July 1. If citizens disagree with their assessment, they are provided an opportunity to be heard in August, and then again in September before the Board of Equalization.

Mr. Mattson and Council members discussed how property is assessed and how marketability figures into the assessment process. Mr. Mattson invited Council members to visit his office at any time, and stated that he would be pleased to update Council again in the future. Mr. Haulman noted that this ties in with Mr. Kranbuehl's comments and that this is an important revenue source for the city. Ms. Zeidler commented that the most critical parts of the assessor's job are to be fair and to make sure that people understand the process.

Council suggested that an article be placed in the city's Quarterly Quill; to advise citizens about the assessment process, and that assessments are increased to keep up with the property sales.

PREVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING – May 8, 2003

Council members received a copy of the May 8 agenda.

Changes to Proposed FY 2004 Budget

Reference for this item was Mr. Tuttle's report dated May 1, 2003, which included a copy of the Sales Tax Fund Capital Improvement Summary that showed a reduction in spending for sidewalks and Stormwater management project to cover the \$150,000 increase in funding for tourism marketing. This was the only change to the proposed budget, which is on the May 8 agenda.

Charter Change

Council members discussed the charter change regarding filling a vacant City Council seat. Mayor Zeidler said the Neighborhood Council discussed the change but provided no positive or negative comments. Council would like to hear from citizens regarding the process. She noted that Council members did not like the process, but citizens have not complained about it.

House Bill 1678 Regarding Rental Housing

Mr. Phillips said that Council would discuss the pending litigation in Closed Session.

Mayor Zeidler asked Mr. Tuttle to start the process to review the city's current ordinances and ways to work with neighborhoods on such issues as graffiti, frequent police patrols, property maintenance, noise control, public drunkenness, and fines.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS—May 2003

Council members received a copy of the May meeting calendar. Mr. Tuttle noted the following special events:

Festival Williamsburg begins on May 23. Sales are brisk for the closing event.

The Farmer's Market opened on Saturday, May 3, but the opening ceremony was delayed until next Saturday because of rain. Mr. Haulman said that Libby Oliver was doing a great job as Market Manager.

"Rock the Block" street fair, Prince George Street, will be held on May 14, 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Mayor Zeidler said William and Mary Graduation is May 11, and asked that the police increase patrol in certain areas.

OPEN FORUM

Mayor Zeidler opened the session for public comment.

David Kranbuehl complimented the new Williamsburg Area Transport system and Mr. Nester for the city's system of bike lanes. He appreciated the work of Mr. Tuttle, the police, and planning staff regarding the problems in his neighborhood. He supported higher local taxes at a time when the State and Federal Governments provide less revenue. He would like to know how commercial assessments are done without resale information.

No one wished to speak. The session was closed.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Houghland Moved that City Council go into Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of discussing one personnel matter per subparagraph 1 concerning appoints to Boards and Commissions, and two legal matters per subparagraph 7 for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation concerning rental housing inspection ordinance and consultation on specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by counsel concerning tax exemptions. The Motion Was Seconded by Mr. Tabb.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Haulman, Scruggs, Zeidler, Tabb, Houghland

No: None

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. (Mayor Zeidler called a five-minute recess.)

At 4:30 p.m., Council met in Open Session.

Mr. Houghland Moved the Certification of Closed Meeting. The Motion was Seconded by Mr. Tabb.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Haulman, Zeidler, Scruggs, Tabb, Houghland

No: None

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Date: May 5, 2003

Motion: Mr. Houghland Second: Mr. Tabb

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Williamsburg has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the City Council that such meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Williamsburg hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters

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lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered by the City of Williamsburg.

VOTE:

Aye: Haulman, Scruggs, Zeidler, Tabb, Houghland

No: None

Absent During Vote: None

Absent During Meeting: None

The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Approved: June 12, 2003

Shelia Y. Crist, Clerk of Council

Jeanne Zeidler, Mayor